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TRENDS IN SOVIET THOUGHT ON LIMITED WARFARE

This is a working paper, prepared in support of NIE 11-14-63, "Capabilities of the Soviet General Purpose Forces, 1963-1969." Primarily on the basis of open Soviet military and political writings, this report attempts to identify new trends in Soviet thinking on limited warfare and to probe their possible consequences for Soviet military policy, or foreign policy as it relates to the management of local crises.

Although the writer has benefited from the suggestions and research findings of colleagues, he is solely responsible for the paper as a whole. The DD/I Research Staff would welcome comment on the paper, addressed to

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TRENDS IN SOVIET THOUGHT ON LIMITED WARFARE

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TRENDS IN SOVIET THOUGHT ON LIMITED WARFARE

Summary

Responsive to a changing world around them and seeking new opportunities to advance the power and prestige of the USSR, the Soviets have embarked on a new course in their thinking on the question of limited warfare. Whereas the Soviets had earlier assumed a rigid negative stance on direct involvement in limited warfare, especially in Europe, they now appear to wish to have the option to use their military forces on a sub-strategic scale. In general, they evince a strong interest in gaining greater flexibility in the management of local crises and, in recent military writings, have sought to communicate this interest to the West, particularly the United States, which has also evinced an interest in reducing the risks of rapid escalation from small-scale warfare in Europe as well as in other critical areas of the world.

There is no indication, however, that the Soviets are interested in bringing greater flexibility to the realm of strategic warfare. On the contrary, the Soviets consistently reject as impracticable, immoral, and unacceptable to them U.S. theories on controlled strategic warfare. Rather, the Soviets stress that the adversaries will fight to a decision in a general nuclear war; they dramatize the horrors of such a war and the certainty that none will escape widespread nuclear destruction. The Soviets, hence, wish to preserve the idea of nuclear stalemate or strategic military stability--not to undermine it. This closes the circle, for the freezing of strategic military power tends to make the local use of military force possible with a low risk of escalation. In short, greater "tactical flexibility" and mutually-acknowledged "strategic inflexibility" appear to be correlative objectives of the Soviet leadership.

It is perhaps too early to estimate with confidence the impact which the observed trend in Soviet thought will

have on military policy, both in regard to the management of crises and the training and equipping of Soviet troops. For one thing, Soviet doctrine still appears to be in a formative state, as is U.S.-NATO doctrine on the problem of limited warfare in the European theater. Even if entirely firmed up, the doctrine would be an inadequate basis for forecasting Soviet behavior in a local crisis because, in the final analysis, how Soviet leaders react will depend not on any established doctrine but on their assessment at the critical time of the risks involved and of their capabilities to exercise various options. That the Soviet leaders appear to be reaching for the option to use elements of their military forces to resolve local issues does not, of course, mean that the Soviets will use them for that purpose. But they probably calculate that such an option is indispensable in an environment of mutually acknowledged strategic stalemate.

Where increased tactical flexibility is likely to affect Soviet policy in Europe, in the absence of an ideal stalemate, is in situations in which the U.S. and Soviet interest in preventing escalation takes precedence over the issue immediately at stake. Thus, it is unlikely that the Soviets would attempt to settle the Berlin question by military means as long as the United States makes clear and credible its determination to defend the Western stake in Berlin with strategic military power, if necessary. Similarly, it is unlikely that the Soviets would launch an all-out conventional attack against Europe as long as tactical nuclear weapons are on standby in NATO forces there, and U.S. doctrine states that the self-imposed armaments restraint would be abandoned if it interferes with the business of winning. Rather, under such conditions (of an imperfect strategic stalemate) Soviet expectations for Western acceptance of their bid for "tactical flexibility" seems to be in the sphere of plainly defensive actions, such as a rebuff of a West German attack against East Germany. Thus, they now appear to be reassessing the risks of rapid escalation to general war--risks they had previously regarded as so great as to inhibit even a Soviet defensive operation if this meant engaging the attackers in a large scale military action in Europe.

It is hard to estimate the scale of limited warfare in Europe on which the Soviets would be willing to fight without resorting to strategic weapons. Full-scale conventional war in Europe, while tactical nuclears are available to both sides, seems improbable as a Soviet expectation. The deep-grained fear of the consequences of a direct massive confrontation between Soviet and American troops in Europe will almost certainly continue to work to avoid such a clash. It is still not clear whether the Soviet conception of tactical flexibility extends to the use of tactical nuclears in limited warfare in Europe. Doctrinal pronouncements on the problem tend to be ambivalent. While some statements consider tactical nuclears a realistic possibility with which Soviet forces must be prepared to deal in a local crisis, most stress the likelihood of escalation if nuclear weapons are employed. The ambivalence may, on the one hand, be intended simultaneously to deter the United States from resorting to tactical nuclears and, failing that, to avoid confronting the United States with an unambiguous promise of escalation; on the other hand, it may reflect different assessments by Soviet specialists of the risks involved in either initiating the use of tactical nuclears, or responding in kind to the opponent's initiative in a local conflict. Outside the European framework, in limited conflicts in underdeveloped areas where there is no direct confrontation between U.S. and Soviet forces, the Soviets, by omission of statements to the contrary, seem to regard the use of tactical nuclears by one of the major powers as a less dangerous course of action.

Distant Limited Military Action

The Soviet search for greater tactical flexibility in the Middle East and Southeast Asia has already affected policy. Beginning in 1962, the Soviets have demonstrated a willingness to use Soviet troops in combat situations in local crises on an unacknowledged basis. The Soviet experience in the Indonesian-West New Guinea crisis and the UAR-Yemen war reflects at the very least a policy decision to use trained Soviet crews while indigenous crews are still in an early stage of training. Beyond this, however, it

is difficult to say how much Soviet philosophy regarding the use of Soviet troops in local wars in underdeveloped areas has already been changed or will change. We do not know, for example, whether the Soviets would favor the use of their troops on an acknowledged basis, under any circumstances, nor how large a military force they would be willing to commit in a local conflict in the Middle East or Southeast Asia. In all probability, the Soviets have not yet changed their estimate that direct involvement of Soviet and U.S. forces even in distant areas, would be extremely dangerous. (There was evidently never any plan to employ Soviet troops based in Cuba in a strictly local war between the United States and Cuba.) There is not only the fear of escalation that restrains the Soviets. There is also the fact that the USSR has a very limited capability for conducting warfare at any distance from the bloc. Therefore, unless and until these restraints are lifted, the USSR will probably try to avoid (1) any direct involvement with U.S. forces in distant areas, and (2) any public knowledge of the employment of Soviet troops in combat in distant areas.

Soviet thinking on limited warfare seems to be moving in the direction of attaining still greater political-military maneuverability in distant areas. Because the Soviets are severely limited in airlift, sealift, and naval support suitable for distant military actions, they might find the idea of a system of foreign bases attractive from the standpoint of their utility in enhancing Soviet limited warfare capabilities. Indonesia, for example, could provide a valuable logistic base if the Soviets decided to give more open support to revolutionary movements in Southeast Asia. However, the leaders of the young states, jealous of their newly acquired sovereignty, are loathe to have it compromised; and, for that reason among others, we are unlikely to see the establishment of full-fledged Soviet military bases in Asia, Africa or the Middle East. If, on the other hand, the USSR manages to win over one of the small countries as an ally or to subvert its government, or if a small country should desperately need Soviet aid in a crisis, the possibility of the creation of a Soviet base on that country's territory would become quite real.

Effect on Weapons

While the change in Soviet thought on limited warfare might have an important impact on the training and equipping of Soviet forces, the basic orientation of the armed forces toward general nuclear war will almost certainly be retained. Where we might expect to see change, if the idea of limited warfare preparations becomes firmly implanted, is in the one-sided emphasis on nuclear warfare evident in Soviet military doctrine, planning and training. Because of the Soviet expectation that a major conflict in Europe would either be nuclear from the start or would rapidly escalate into a global war, virtually the full weight of professional Soviet military thinking on large-scale combat in Europe has up to now been brought to bear on problems of nuclear war. Now, however, Soviet military specialists may be concerned that the overwhelming emphasis in Soviet doctrine on general nuclear war is eroding the USSR's conventional war-making capability, and that in a future situation of a strategic nuclear stalemate or stand-off this could be disastrous for Soviet foreign policy. The dilemma of having to prepare the armed forces simultaneously for nuclear and limited warfare may, in terms of the ideal, be insoluble, inasmuch as the nuclear and conventional battlefields make very different, and at times, contradictory demands as regards mode of operations and equipment. And the USSR is bound to be more constrained in respect to satisfying dual force requirements than the United States because of more limited resources. But a compromise may be reached in Soviet military planning, whereby the erosion of conventional capabilities is slowed down or arrested and specific kinds of capabilities for limited warfare are added that do not now exist. The recent appearance, after a long absence, of a spate of articles in the Soviet military press on the subject of amphibious landings may be an indication of such a readjustment.

I. THE EVOLUTION OF DOCTRINE

In recent years, Soviet doctrine on limited warfare has been in the process of adjustment to new strategic objectives and opportunities. The focal point of change which at times has been so gradual as to be barely perceptible, has been the critical question of escalation from a local conflagration to general nuclear war. There has been a distinct if somewhat tortuous movement away from earlier categorical positions on the danger of escalation from limited warfare in various parts of the world. The major watersheds in this process have tended to follow, usually after a good interval, important shifts in U.S. foreign policy and strategic thought bearing on limited warfare. Though reflecting the keen responsiveness of Soviet leaders to such developments in the West, the changes in Soviet doctrine have been not imitative but singularly opportunistic. Their common purpose appears to be that of affording Soviet leaders greater flexibility and maneuverability in dealing with local issues, particularly in political and military crises. But there may be other, more parochial reasons for changing the doctrine, such as the desire of various military leaders to justify the maintenance of large and versatile conventional forces.

In the mid-and late fifties, the Soviets assumed a very rigid posture in Europe where they deliberately fostered a politically taut situation. If Europe becomes an "arena of war," the USSR Supreme Soviet solemnly declared in Feburary 1955, such a war "would inevitably develop into another world war." The Soviets were content to live without any military flexibility in Europe and with the alternatives only of all-out nuclear war or humiliating surrender in the event of a serious Western military probe or political challenge. They did not seem to find this an unacceptable position because, at the time, the U.S. was similarly constrained.

Outside Europe, in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, the Soviets saw a less rigid political and military environment and consequently greater opportunity for expanding Soviet influence in those areas. In the fall of 1955, the

USSR (through the Czechs) made its initial arms deal with a non-bloc country, Egypt, at Egypt's initiative, at a time when the primary Soviet objective in the Middle East was the destruction of "aggressive military blocs"--notably the new Baghdad Pact. In 1956, the Soviets offered the Indonesian government arms for the first time, perhaps sensing a good opportunity there to have Soviet weapons used directly against NATO countries in the area. Military assistance then became and has remained a major part of the Soviet aid program to non-bloc countries.

At no time between the Korean War and 1962, however, did the USSR assign elements of its own forces a combat role in local conflicts outside satellite countries. Soviet intervention in the Suez crisis of 1956 took the form of strategic threat--the rattling of missiles capable of hitting Britain and France--and the threatened dispatch of "volunteers" to participate in the local crisis. But in actuality, the Soviets were so anxious not to become involved militarily in the local crisis that they forbade the Egyptians to use forty-five IL-28 jet bombers supplied earlier by the USSR. Moreover, Soviet bloc advisers and technicians in Egypt were instructed not to take part in the fighting and, immediately after the first air attacks, most of them were withdrawn from the crisis area. Thus, while they were willing to export arms (albeit obsolescent by Soviet standards) to small countries with the aim of altering the power balance in the area and to run the risk of those weapons being used against members of the Western alliance, the Soviets nevertheless were extremely anxious (especially in time of crisis) to avoid becoming directly involved in a local war.

The Soviets might for a short time have assessed the danger of direct involvement in local war somewhat differently when, in the glow of the first successful ICBM test in August 1957, they jubilantly claimed that the correlation of forces in the world now favored the socialist camp and that the advent of strategic rockets nullified the strategic advantages formerly possessed by the United States. In bringing the Syrian crisis to a pitch in October 1957, the Soviets evinced a new emboldened assessment of the risks of involvement in local war: they publicized both the dispatch of Marshal Rokosovskiy to the Trans-Caucasus Military

District and the holding of joint maneuvers by that command and the Black Sea Fleet. Against this backdrop, Marshal Zhukov warned from Albania, where he was visiting: "We are all ready to strike at any military adventure organized by the United States near our southern border." Several days later, however, directly after receiving a communiqué affirming U.S.-British solidarity with Turkey, Khrushchev turned up at the Turkish Embassy in Moscow in an affable mood and thereby ended the crisis. And shortly after that, on 2 November, the Central Committee announced that it had expelled Marshal Zhukov from that body as well as from the Presidium on the grounds that (1) he undermined Party leadership of the army and (2) he was "disposed to adventurism in his understanding of the USSR's foreign policy."

The charge of "adventurism" implied that it was Zhukov's heavy hand that had steered the Soviets toward military intervention in the Syrian-Turkish affair. We of course, do not know what really happened, but it appears from the immediate aftermath that Khrushchev and his associates at least in retrospect regarded the moves toward direct intervention in strength as a serious mistake entailing great risks of escalation to strategic warfare. The lessons that the Soviets appear to have come away with from the crisis are these: (1) It is one thing to intervene in an uprising in Hungary, a satellite; it is quite another thing to intervene in support of a sympathetic elite in Syria, which is neither a satellite nor a contiguous country, by making war against Turkey, a NATO ally of the United States. (2) The much vaunted demonstration of a Soviet ICBM capability did not make the West any the less reluctant to meet local Soviet challenges head-on, risking strategic warfare if necessary. (3) New methods had to be found to defend political gains at a distance from bloc territory without becoming involved in a direct clash between Soviet and American forces.

The impact of the crisis on Soviet doctrine was reflected in the renewed emphasis by Soviet leaders on the strong likelihood of escalation from all types of local wars. Khrushchev, for example, declared in an interview in November 1957: "We must not think that under present conditions minor wars would be localized. Should such wars break out,

they could soon grow into a world war." A prominent Soviet military writer and mouthpiece for Khrushchev's views, Major General Talenskiy, was even more categorical in March of the following year:

> ....Contemporary strategy stresses with all clarity that the all-embracing nature of war is an inevitable and logical development. At present a local war can be nothing but the initial stage of a world war. (Talenskiy's emphasis)

Over the same span of time, 1957-58, the U.S. doctrine of "massive retaliation" was being transformed at the hands of the Secretary of State, into a more flexible policy which involved a new concept--the use of tactical nuclear weapons in a localized conflict. This development evidently sparked concern in Soviet military quarters over its import for Soviet doctrine and military capabilities. Although his was then a lonely cry in the wilderness, a Colonel Petrov in a May 1958 issue of the now defunct newspaper Soviet Aviation had called upon Soviet military science to "develop methods and forces for conducting armed struggle on any scale."

Toward Greater Tactical Flexibility

An important watershed in the transformation of Soviet doctrine on limited warfare was reached in January 1961, when Khrushchev delivered one of his rare discourses on the subject. In a speech which heralded a massive offensive aimed at expanding Soviet influence in the underdeveloped areas, Khrushchev de-emphasized the probability of escalation of certain types of local military conflicts. He distinguished between "local wars" and "national liberation wars," describing the latter as "inevitable" and implying that Soviet bloc encouragement of them (which he advocated) would not lead to general war. Subsequent official Soviet pronouncements on the subject of local war went even further in de-emphasizing the danger of escalation. For example, the CPSU Program published in July 1961 did not

even include a warning that local war might spread into general war. Nor did Khrushchev himself refer to the danger of escalation from local conflicts outside Europe the last time he made a policy statement on the subject of local wars, at the 22nd CPSU Congress in October 1961.

Also in 1961, in open military publications, such "conservative" officers as Marshal Rotmistrov and General Kurochkin, began to urge the study of local wars of the postwar period as well as World War II, as a basis for solving contemporary problems of military science. This new interest in the study of local wars was not however reflected in military writings

What the Soviets were suggesting in 1961, in effect, was that the danger of escalation had diminished in the underdeveloped areas, especially on the Asian periphery and in the Middle East, but that the strategic situation remained taut as ever in Europe. The new turn in doctrine on local war was accompanied by a major change in the Soviet military aid and assistance program. In early 1961, the Soviet Union for the first time granted up-to-date military equipment to Indonesia. Since then, Egypt, Iraq, Finland, Syria as well as Cuba also have received first line Soviet equipment. That is to say, most equipment furnished the major recipients of Soviet aid has been identical with the material that the USSR is manufacturing for its own armed forces, including equipment not yet fully deployed in the bloc and not even made available to Communist China.

As regards Europe, there has been in addition to public statements, good collateral evidence that Khrushchev thought a local war there to be out of the question in 1961.

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The military, of course, would have preferred that any combat in Europe be localized, but [redacted] military writings at the time saw this as only a remote possibility at the very least.

The publication of the book "Military Strategy" in May 1962 marked another watershed in the evolution of Soviet doctrine on limited warfare. It revealed an awakened Soviet interest in extending to the European theater the flexibility which the USSR by then enjoyed in the management of local crises in underdeveloped areas. Certain Soviet leaders had evidently come to regard the established doctrine on local or conventional warfare in Europe as too dangerous and restrictive for Soviet political and military maneuver. Their malaise was probably one of envy of the United States leadership, which more than a year before had discarded its strategic strait-jacket and developed a theory of "flexible response" applicable to the European theater. (In its April 1961 statement to the NATO Council, the U.S. had called for

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conventional forces at least strong enough to effect a pause in the event of substantial Soviet conventional aggression.)

The fact that the book, "Military Strategy," appears to be at cross-purposes with itself on the question of limited warfare (this is true of the revised edition as well as the original) may, in part, reflect a continuing internal dialogue on that question, and in part, the complexity of the problem and the multiple purposes which publicly enunciated doctrine may be intended to serve. In some places the book (in both its versions) stressed the improbability of limited warfare in Europe, emphasizing that if nuclear powers are drawn into an armed conflict it will "inevitably develop into an all-out nuclear war," and threatening that a "direct attack against the USSR or other socialist countries...will obviously lead to a new world war." But elsewhere the book discussed local war situations and operations, including a hypothetical large-scale non-nuclear "local war" in central Europe, and urged that a place be carved out for local war in Soviet military strategy. Thus, the book strongly implied an active role in small-scale war for the Soviet military establishment: "Soviet military strategy calls for the study of the means of conducting such wars in order to prevent them from developing into a world war and to bring quick victory over the enemy." In another place the book (in its first edition) called for the study of local war on the grounds that "such a war might also be thrust upon the socialist countries" by "imperialist circles fearing that world war might be completely disastrous for capitalism." (The reference to socialist countries was dropped in the revised edition, which generally played down the Western threat.) The fact that for the first time in a long while the book discussed types of operations that would be distinctly applicable to limited war, is also suggestive of strong interest in the problem. Geographic areas are unfortunately not mentioned in the context of such discussions, as in the following examples:

> A local war might be another matter. Here, as before, the main events might develop in the areas of military operations near the front, although the methods of armed conflict in this case as well have been

changed considerably compared with the past war, since the war would be conducted with different weapons and the threat of nuclear war would hang constantly over the warring countries.

. . . . . .

Each of these types of strategic operations will be manifested in a world-wide nuclear war. In local wars, certain of these types of strategic operations may not be used or will be used on a limited scale. This would be particularly true of military operations deep within enemy territory. Military operations in land and naval theaters acquire decisive significance in such wars.

Although the revised edition of the book, published in autumn of this year, also appeared to be at cross-purposes with itself, it plainly sustained the previous emphasis on the need to prepare Soviet forces for limited warfare, even in Europe if necessary. Equally significant is the fact that since last winter there have been a number of articles in the Soviet military press urging that Soviet forces be prepared for local war contingencies, including the use of tactical nuclears. Note how the statements, in chronological progression, tend to become more specific and clear:

Last January, Col. Gen. S.M. Shtemenko, chief of the main staff of the ground forces, could have had a non-nuclear conflict in mind when he wrote in RED STAR that Soviet tank and motorized infantry troops can "operate successfully under conditions of the use of nuclear weapons as well as of the use of only conventional means of destruction." He also wrote elsewhere in the article in a similar vein that field training of ground troops includes consideration of both the "conditions of a mutual and wide application of nuclear weapons, and of conventional means of

combat." But again the statements could also have referred to isolated situations in a nuclear war in which battles are fought with conventional weapons alone.

This ambiguity was removed in February when the Commander of the Leningrad Military District, Army General M.I. Kazakov, stated that the USSR was developing its conventional forces because the West was planning to fight local wars, presumably without nuclear weapons.

In May, articles by a "radical" and a "conservative" indicated that both schools of thought had a common interest in adjusting Soviet doctrine and capabilities to local war contingencies. In what was generally a strongly Khrushchevian article, Major D. Kazakov wrote in the No. 10 issue of KOMMUNIST OF THE ARMED FORCES:

> Based on the dialectics of reality, Soviet military science believes that a future war, if it is impossible to prevent, can begin suddenly as a world nuclear and missile war. However, this conclusion does not exclude the possibility that under certain circumstances a world conflict may burst forth from a local war. We should also not lose sight of the fact that the imperialists, terrorized before the inevitability of a mighty return nuclear missile strike, may force upon us another form of war, without the use of nuclear weapons. The practical conclusion here is that our Armed Forces should be prepared to offer proper resistance with conventional weapons, maintaining missiles and nuclear weapons at the highest degree of combat readiness.

And Marshal Rotmistrov, one of the leading conservative spokesmen, wrote in the 11 May issue of the English language MOSCOW NEWS:

> The Soviet Army has at its command an absolutely new arsenal of weapons,

> with well-trained men able to wage both atomic and conventional warfare, on a large or small scale, in any climate and on any territory.

The fact that this statement appeared in a newspaper published only in English meant, of course, that the message was intended expressly for American and British eyes. (The idea to which Rotmistrov has alluded, of employing tactical nuclears in a small-scale war is a nettlesome and evidently highly controversial question for the Soviets, and we shall discuss it in various places in this paper.)

Finally, the most recent evidence of change in Soviet thinking on limited warfare is also perhaps the most striking. We refer here to an article published in RED STAR on 2 November 1963, in which four of the authors of the book "Military Strategy" lambasted the U.S. editors of the English translations (of the first edition) for their "slanderous" commentaries on the work. Escalation and limited war were among the questions on which they showed special sensitivity. They insisted, in the first place, that the U.S. editors were in gross error in saying that "A retaliatory strike by the USSR as a result of an attack against one of the states which are members of the Soviet bloc would mean that the Soviet Union would strike the first blow against the United States." Obviously, the Soviet authors retorted, "the unleashing of war against the Soviet Union as a result of an attack against one of the socialist states would not 'mean' a 'strike against the USA.'" They next said that in the book they were not speaking about the U.S. but about an attack by "imperialist forces." If, of course, the U.S. itself were the aggressor, then the retaliatory blow would be struck against that country. Clearly, these writers too, are trying to get a message across to the U.S.; they are making a pitch for flexibility--they want it known that they, too, wish to respond to a local military action in Europe in proportion to the situation, without automatically provoking an attack by U.S. strategic forces.

In the same article, the Soviet authors also sought to clarify their position on escalation. They described as an outright falsification a truncated statement lifted

from the U.S. editors' annotations that the Soviets say that local war will inevitably turn into a global war. Much exercised over this, the Soviet authors retorted that nowhere in the book was it said that "any local war will inevitably turn into a global war." This was an "absurd conclusion," they said--perhaps with the Chinese in mind, for they are the ones who have accused the Soviets of advancing such a line. The authors then noted that since the Second World War, there had been some 70 military conflicts and local wars. What was actually said in the book, they declared, was that any local war "can" turn into a world war. "Obviously, the words 'inevitably' and 'can' have a different meaning." As if that were not enough, the Soviet authors proceeded to rebuke the U.S. editors for saying that in the Soviet view any war "must... take the form of a world nuclear war." (Their elipsis and italics.) According to the Soviet authors in their article: "What is emphasized in the book is not that any war will turn into nuclear war, but only such a war in which the nuclear powers are involved."

The foregoing, in short, are the best available examples of the darts and turns in recent Soviet writings on the question of limited warfare. They are plainly suggestive of new interests, new ways of thinking and planning for local war contingencies. Yet, they have appeared along with reiterations of elements of the established doctrine that tend to suggest that little if anything has really changed in Soviet expectations about limited warfare. The case in point is the periodic reiteration right up to the present time of the doctrinal forumla which states that if the major powers are drawn into a local war (evidently anywhere in the world) the war will inevitably escalate into a global nuclear war.

Because the picture is not yet clear, the evidence being not only thin but mixed, we cannot draw firm conclusions about the present status of Soviet doctrine on limited war. What we can say with confidence, however, is at least this: Soviet thought on limited warfare is in a highly formative stage; political and military leaders are sensing new opportunities and requirements in response to changing political and strategic relationships. Above all, it is

clear that the common direction of their thinking is toward increased flexibility in sub-strategic crises.

Toward Strategic Nuclear Stalemate

There is also an important corollary to the search for greater tactical flexibility. The Soviets have made it abundantly clear that they have no interest whatever in introducing any flexibility into the realm of strategic warfare. They consistently reject as impracticable, immoral, and thoroughly unacceptable to them current U.S. theories on controlled strategic warfare. In the course of repudiating these theories, the Soviets usually impugn U.S. motives, saying that the real intention of the "Pentagon brass hats" is to convince the U.S. people that nuclear war need not be horrible. The Soviets, for their part, dramatize the horrors of general nuclear war and the certainty that neither side will escape widespread destruction; they stress, in addition, that because of the ideological problem, the adversaries will be bound to fight to a decision in such a war.

In our view, this public stance is not simply a propaganda harangue intended to portray the USSR as a champion of peace. The Soviets obviously have a strong interest in avoiding general war. They have made it clear that they fully understand the size and power of American strategic forces. And there is no reason to believe that they have been shaken of the manifest conviction that a general nuclear war would not spare the USSR unacceptable destruction, irrespective of the conditions under which the war had begun. As stated in a recent U.S. national intelligence estimate, the available evidence does not suggest that the Soviet leaders are building their forces to achieve a position from which they could launch a deliberate attack on the West and count on reducing retaliation to levels that would be in any sense tolerable. Unless and until the Soviets achieve such a position, they almost certainly will not regard the initiation of strategic warfare by themselves a rational course of action.

Whether or not the Soviets really believe that, once the strategic threshold is crossed, the war cannot be brought under control, is, of course, beyond our ability to know. Whatever they believe now, there is always the possibility that they might act differently in the midst of a real emergency. All we can say at this time is that it is plainly not in the interest of the USSR to admit to the possibility of controlling general war once it has started. To do so would have the effect of undermining the notion which the Soviets are trying to preserve of a strategic stalemate. General war has got to be thought of as an almost impossible course of action if the stalemate is to be generally acknowledged.

Motivating Factors

Apart from the wish to avoid general war and the propaganda benefits to be derived from deploring the idea of making it manageable, there are a number of strong political reasons why the Soviets are seeking to make the strategic power situation more, not less, rigid. For one thing, theoretically, a strategic nuclear stalemate--which diminishes greatly the credibility of strategic threats and tends to prevent the use of strategic military power--makes possible the use of military force on a sub-strategic scale (not directly involving the territories of the major adversaries) with a low risk of escalation. The achievement of "strategic inflexibility," as it were tends to be a sine quo non for greater "tactical flexibility" in the sense of limited warfare possibilities. They are, in short, correlative aspirations of the Soviet regime.

As a practical problem, the Soviet design for tactical flexibility and strategic inflexibility is readily understandable in terms of the European situation. It is clear to the Soviets that the United States defends its stakes in Europe primarily with strategic power, and the lessened possibility of its use through acquiescense in a strategic nuclear stalemate is therefore an important Soviet goal. The Soviets are quick to agree with any American suggestion that a "balance" of military power has been reached, whereby

neither side can impose its will on its adversary by the threat or use of strategic forces. At one point, in the first edition of the book "Military Strategy," the authors wrote that American strategists "have begun to understand" that the multiplication of strategic nuclear weapons in the U.S. and USSR has already brought about a nuclear stalemate. The original edition went so far as to say (implying that the Soviets endorsed this notion) that "the growth of nuclear-missile power is inversely proportional to the possibility of its use." To suggest that the massing of weapons has increased stability, of course, contradicts the traditional Soviet line that the arms race increases the danger of war; it was probably for this reason that the revised edition of the book dropped the sensitive statements, but nevertheless retained references to strategic stalemate. In addition, the fact that the revised version dropped a reference to a statement by President Kennedy (November 1961) on the need for the United States to have a choice somewhere between "humiliation and holocaust" also seems to point up Soviet sensitivity on this question: for this is precisely the predicament in which the Soviets now find themselves.

This leads us to another consideration: Soviet envy of the new military flexibility sought and partially attained by the United States in the international arena, particularly in Europe. The Cuban experience may have underscored the need to prevent the United States from acquiring in Europe the advantageous position it enjoyed in Cuba, of being able to use superior forces in a localized conflict with fair confidence that the opponent would not expand the conflict to strategic nuclear warfare. The Soviets seem to envy also the political advantages which the United States might gain from military flexibility, such as increased credibility for its threats of counteraction and greater maneuverability in local crises. There is, for example, an unmistakable air of seriousness in Soviet criticism of the United States for abandoning the "massive retaliation" doctrine and developing instead its local war theories for carrying out "aggressive designs" without risking the collapse of the capitalist system in a world war. The envy of which we speak is particularly in evidence in statements made by Soviet military leaders over the past year (such as those cited earlier in this paper) promising not escalation, but

an appropriate rebuff--i.e., a response in kind--to any local acts of aggression by the imperialists. A self-conscious power, the USSR feels obliged to declare its acceptance of the U.S. political and military challenge anywhere in the world, and hence finds that it must claim or imply a military doctrine and capability commensurate with the challenge. Thus the assertion (quoted earlier) by Marshal Rotmistrov that the Soviet army is capable of fighting any kind of war, on any scale, anywhere in the world, is a direct reply to the challenge implicit in U.S. doctrine. The book "Military Strategy," had earlier made clear the nature of the U.S. challenge, as in the following quotation:

> The strategic concept, the /President's/ message of March 28, 1961, stressed, "must be both flexible and determined" and must prepare for the conduct of any war: general or local, nuclear or conventional, large or small. This concept is based upon the same idea as a "retaliatory strike" the only difference being that, whereas previously the threat of such a strike implied the unlimited use of nuclear weapons regardless of the scale of /the existing/ conflict, i.e., a general nuclear war, now the "retaliatory strike" must be appropriate to the nature of the potential conflict.

The Soviets, by the way, have long been responsive to developments in Western strategic thinking and doctrine, as well as to military hardware in NATO arsenals. Thus, it was above all owing to their fear of strong Western reliance on nuclears, in the event of war in Europe, that the Soviets took a very dim view of the possibility of limiting the scope of armed conflict there. Soviet military documents (published prior to May 1962) asserted that NATO has no limited war doctrine, that it does not plan to fight any serious conventional war, that the (imputed) inferior conventional strength of NATO is compensated for (in Western planning) by nuclear weapons, and that all calculations of the NATO command are based on

the use of nuclear weapons. Now it is true that the Soviets have for several years closely followed strategic debates in this country and have witnessed the build-up of certain conventional forces for specialized local war operations. But they did not associate these earlier developments with Western strategy for Europe. In their view, while the U.S. massive retaliation strategy was by 1958 all but dead and buried as far as the rest of the world was concerned, it was still very much alive as a strategy for Europe.

Since 1961, however, the Soviets have been witness to concerted efforts by U.S. leaders (as revealed in speeches by the Secretary of Defense among others) in radically altering NATO strategy for Europe. Soviet publications have observed a U.S. preference for staged responses to Soviet bloc initiatives and for strengthening NATO conventional forces in Europe in order to reduce NATO's dependence on nuclears. Other steps taken by the United States may also have served to confirm in Soviet eyes this trend toward developing concepts and capabilities for non-nuclear war in Europe.

In May 1962--with the publication of "Military Strategy"--the Soviets indicated that they understood that the doctrine of "flexible response" was now being adapted to the European theater:

> The strategy of "massive retaliation" which existed prior to 1961 in the U.S. and NATO ...has become obsolete and is being replaced by the strategy of "flexible response" which provides for the preparation and conduct not only of general nuclear war but also of limited wars with or without the use of nuclear weapons against the socialist countries.

However, the fact that the U.S. strategy of "flexible response" has been the subject of controversy between the United States and some of its NATO allies who fear that the strategy will undermine the nuclear deterrent, probably has kept the Soviets from drawing firm conclusions for their own military doctrine and estimates.

II. IMPLICATIONS FOR SOVIET MILITARY POLICY

It is perhaps still too early to estimate with confidence the impact which the observed trend in Soviet thought on limited warfare will have on Soviet military policy, both in regard to the management of crises and the training and equipping of Soviet troops. What can be said at this time is largely of a hypothetical order. There are, in addition, several considerations which bear directly on the relationship of doctrine and policy that must first be sorted out and acknowledged as qualifiers to any conjecture subsequently set forth in this paper.

To begin, we are most constrained when attempting to forecast Soviet behavior in a military crisis on the basis of explicit Soviet military doctrine. Whether and how the Soviet leaders will react in a military way in any crisis anywhere in the world will undoubtedly depend not on any established doctrine, but on their assessment at the time of the crisis of the risks involved--what they may believe they stand to gain or to lose; the local and strategic apportionment of power; and how they assess the actions and policies of the opponent. Surely, Khrushchev will not be bound by any doctrine, but will reserve maximum freedom of action to manage the crisis (as he did in the case of Cuba), probably as any head of state would do.

In the case of central Europe, at this juncture, any Soviet assessment of the risks of engaging in limited military actions in Europe is likely to be complicated by a number of factors. There is first of all the uncertainty about how far the United States would be willing to go in a military engagement without using its local nuclear power. There is also the uncertainty about how individual NATO countries would react when warfare is conducted or about to be conducted on their soil. (What may be "tactical" to the United States and Soviet Union may be "strategic" to the NATO allies.) The Soviets are fully aware of the penchant of certain continental NATO countries for a front-line nuclear defense and an independent strategic nuclear deterrent. We do not yet have a clear reading of how Soviet military planners are reacting to these developments.

Secondly, Soviet declaratory policy on military doctrine plays an important role in the contest of power politics, East-West as well as Sino-Soviet. (Marshal Sokolovskiy and his colleagues, in their preface to the second edition of "Military Strategy" made it clear that the book was intended for Western eyes as well as Communist.) Consider the question of escalation, around which Soviet discussion of limited warfare has mainly revolved. The Soviets often reiterate the doctrinal formula which states that if the major nuclear powers are drawn into a local war, the war will inevitably escalate into a general nuclear war. Obviously (although pure determinists may disagree), war will not escalate automatically; escalation will depend on the will of the antagonists. (The style of leadership of the present Soviet regime is suggestive of supreme pragmatism and opportunism in reaching the "determined" historical objective of a world-wide Communist triumph.) The main purpose of reiterating this doctrine in public forums is to deter the United States from undertaking military actions against the USSR in local situations. In their propaganda, the Soviets exploit the danger of escalation in such a way as to threaten a would-be adversary with more serious counteractions than he might wish to accept; they try to instill doubt in his mind as to the risks of the venture; and, generally, they try to deter him from initiating a military action in a political crisis or, as in the case of Cuba, to inhibit him from effectively responding to a local Communist challenge.

It might have been the case, moreover, that in deciding to undertake the Cuban venture of 1962, the Soviet leaders calculated that their U.S. counterparts found credible the Soviet threat of automatic escalation from a local conflict in which U.S. and Soviet troops were directly involved. Khrushchev may have thought that U.S. fear that a general war would rise out of a conflict over Cuba, where Soviet troops were stationed, would deter the U.S. from attacking Cuba--or at least would delay U.S. military actions long enough to gain time to place strategic missiles in Cuba. In fact, even now the Soviet leaders may calculate that the retention of some Soviet troops in Cuba acts as a strong deterrent--a reminder to the U.S. of the danger of escalation in the event of a U.S. military initiative against Cuba.

Of course, the continued token Soviet military presence in Cuba is based on the safe assumption that the United States will not attack Cuba--at least not without warning, in which case the troops could be hastily withdrawn or be declared "non-belligerent."

At the same time, to be sure, the Soviets are genuinely concerned about the danger of escalation--as many people are in this country--in the event of a direct military clash between U.S. and Soviet forces. In this respect, the residual Soviet fear of general war serves to regulate the peacetime exploitation of the country's military power, especially in the management of political or military crises. This built-in element of restraint may even operate independently of any expressed U.S. resolve to escalate a conflict. There is also the possibility, depending upon the credibility of the threat of "inevitable" escalation, that once U.S. and Soviet forces come directly to blows, the doctrine would be a self-fulfilling prophesy. This is because each antagonist might believe that the other really believes in "inevitable" escalation and would act on that belief to secure the great advantage of striking first. Theoretically, however, in a situation of acknowledged strategic stalemate, this possibility is remote. And practically, in terms of the existing relative capabilities for the ultimate situation, the Soviets would be strongly reluctant to assume this "inevitability."

Recently, in using military doctrine as an instrument to communicate intentions or threats to the West, the Soviets have slipped into a dilemma. On the one hand, they wish to deter the United States, as suggested in the foregoing paragraphs. With this aim in view, they stress the danger of escalation from local conflicts. On the other hand they wish to attain greater flexibility so as to be able to use military forces at their disposal in a local situation without bringing on a devastating attack by SAC against the USSR It is no wonder, then, that Soviet military writers often appear to be at cross-purposes with themselves in dealing with the question of escalation from limited warfare.

A good example of the contortions to be found in recent Soviet literature is the disavowal in the November 2 RED STAR of any intent to attack the U.S. first in the event of an attack by a NATO ally against a Soviet satellite, four months after the assertion by Marshal Yeremenko in an INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS article that

> The laws of modern war are implacable: no matter which NATO country sows the wind, the whole /NATO/ bloc would reap the whirlwind. This is axiomatic nowadays.

This is not necessarily a case of flat contradiction, however. When read in the general context of his article, Yeremenko's statement applies almost exclusively to a situation in which a NATO country ("Federal Germany above all") strikes a nuclear blow against the USSR--hardly a "local war." Yeremenko presumes a situation in which West Germany has a nuclear capability. The motive behind Yeremenko's threat is clear: the Soviets are intent on forestalling the creation of a multilateral nuclear force (desired by the United States) or a multinational nuclear force (the variant desired by some West European countries). In fact, in the course of discussing the idea of "multinational nuclear forces," Yeremenko acknowledges that the arguments in support of this concept "might carry some weight" if it were a question of conventional arms.

Finally, while we may benefit from the fact that Soviet military doctrine sets forth the guidelines for the development of the military establishment, it is still hard to estimate on that basis the future course of training and equipping of Soviet troops. This is because Soviet doctrine is still very much in flux, a fact which is suggestive of indecision on a number of basic military policy questions. (There is substantial corroborative evidence of such indecision, as for example, in the continuing dispute over the prerogatives of the military and political leaders in the sphere of defense palnning, and in the interminable debates over resource allocations.) That Soviet doctrine has not yet been worked out on a whole range of questions pertaining to the conduct of a possible future war is made clear in the following paragraph found only in

the revised edition of the book "Military Strategy," published this fall:

> These questions are subject to polemics. Essentially, the argument is over the basic ways in which future war will be conducted, whether this is to be a ground war with the employment of nuclear weapons as a means of supporting the operations of the ground forces, or a fundamentally new war in which the main means of deciding strategic tasks will be nuclear-rocket weapons.

The European Theater

That the Soviet leaders appear to be reaching for the option to use elements of their military forces to resolve local East-West confrontations even in such a critical area as central Europe, does not mean, of course, that the Soviets will use their forces for that purpose; it means a greater willingness to use them if they regard the risk of escalation from their action as low or controllable in a given situation. Such an option, ideally, presumes (1) a diminished credibility for strategic military threats and (2) an understanding by the opponents that there is room for fighting to a decision over the local issue without either side causing the conflict to escalate. The option also presumes that the interest which both sides have in preventing escalation to strategic proportions takes precedence over the interest immediately at stake.

Were this situation applied to Berlin, to take an extreme but critical case, the Soviets would clearly be in an advantageous position, given the present deployment of forces on both sides. The Soviets could use their local military proponderance to resolve the Berlin question in their favor overnight. For what has made Khrushchev accept this "bone in his throat" for so long and after so many ultimatums is not the military garrison in

West Berlin but the fear of U.S. determination to defend the Western stake in Berlin even if it means resorting to strategic nuclear weapons. By the same token, as long as the United States succeeds in making credible its determination to protect the integrity of West Berlin with strategic firepower, if necessary, Soviet policy regarding Berlin is not likely to be affected by changes in Soviet doctrine on limited warfare in Europe.

As to the possibility of an all-out Soviet conventional attack against Europe, given the present array of military power and commitments, this, too, seems out of the question irrespective of a softening of the Soviet position on limited warfare in Europe. As a prominent Western student of strategy has pointed out, the inducement offered to the Russians to stay non-nuclear in an all-out premeditated attack has been accompanied by the proviso that we will abandon the armaments restraint as soon as it seems to interfere with the serious business of winning. As long as this remains a credible U.S. doctrine, and as long as tactical nuclear weapons are on standby among NATO forces in Europe, the Soviets would almost certainly estimate that the tactical nuclear weapons would be used to stem the aggression.

Where increased tactical flexibility will have an impact on military policy under conditions of an imperfect strategic stalemate is, as suggested earlier, in those situations in which the U.S. interest in preventing escalation plainly takes precedence over the issue at hand. One such situation might be an attack by West Germany against East Germany, or intervention by West German troops in the event of a major revolt in East Germany. The first case is not our scenario, but a Soviet one. It appeared in both editions of the book "Military Strategy."* In such a case, Soviet bloc forces would counter the aggression,

*It has also appeared in RED STAR on 26 December 1962, written by one of the authors of "Military Strategy," Maj. Gen. A. A. Prokhorov.

might strike certain bases in West Germany ("There may also be attempts to strike rear objectives with the help of aviation, although it is doubtful whether such strikes will take place on a large scale..."), but probably would not "go beyond the Yalu" in the sense of overrunning and occupying parts of West Germany--for fear of triggering escalation to general nuclear war.

Another case in point is the illustration mentioned earlier in RED STAR on November 2, in which the Soviets claimed that they would rebuff an "imperialist attack" against a socialist country, but would not attack the United States unless it had first attacked the Soviet homeland.

The point to be made here, it seems is that up to now, the Soviets have been inclined to regard the risks of rapid escalation to general war, in the event of an attack by one or more European NATO countries against an East European satellite, as being so great as to inhibit (or even prohibit) a suitable rebuff, if that meant engaging the attackers in a large-scale military action. Now, the Soviets look at the risks differently and appear to be eliciting Western reactions to this change. It is, in short, in the sphere of plainly defensive actions or inadvertent confrontations that the Soviets would hope to gain most from their bid for "tactical flexibility." And it is probably only that kind of flexibility in Europe to which the Soviets might realistically expect the United States and its allies to accede.

The deep-grained fear of the consequences of a direct massive confrontation between Soviet and American troops in Europe will almost certainly work to avoid such a clash. Yet the present realities are such that Soviet forces would necessarily be drawn into any serious military conflict between say, West Germany and East Germany; in that event, U.S. forces would also very likely become involved. What the Soviets might attempt to do in such a situation --if their interest in preventing escalation is stronger than their interest in the matter being fought over--is to depict the bloc military forces engaged in the conflict as a Warsaw Pact operation under the command of an East German. This might serve to deflate the anxiety on both

sides about escalation, for the operation--especially if it is a defensive one--would be depicted as serving an East German political aim rather than a Soviet. That is, it would be a kind of Soviet political-strategic disengagement, despite Soviet local military involvement. It would probably be the closest thing to a proxy war in Europe.

That the Soviets might have given some thought to such a political safeguard, flimsy though it may seem, is suggested by a trend begun in September 1962, of publicly naming an East European officer of ministerial rank as being in command of a joint Warsaw Pact exercise. There have been three such exercises to date.

The Nuclear Problem

It is not clear whether the Soviet conception of "tactical flexibility" includes room for the tactical employment of nuclear weapons. When the Soviets address themselves specifically to the use of nuclear weapons in limited warfare (we have only open sources to go on here), the picture becomes very hazy. We have, again, only been able to perceive trends. The Soviets had consistently deprecated the very idea of "tactical" nuclear weapons until they themselves had succeeded in equipping their own forces with such weapons in strength. Since early 1961, the Soviets have taken a more sober look at the prospects for using tactical nuclears in local warfare as well as in general war. They tend to treat the employment of nuclears in local crises in general as a possible contingency with which Soviet forces must be prepared to deal. One wonders whether some Soviet theorists might also be inclined to see it as a more probable development in the event of a stable mutual strategic deterrent, which we believe is a Soviet goal (and an expressed American expectation). Under such a condition, as persuasively pointed out by some Western analysts, the factors which inhibit escalation from a limited war to a general war should encourage the use of tactical nuclear weapons in limited war.

The striking ambivalence evident especially since last fall in Soviet statements on the probability of escalation from a local nuclear conflict is plainly suggestive of an intent to keep the West off balance and deterred from introducing nuclears. (In the latter respect, the ambivalence is probably seen as a way of discouraging escalation to general war in the event that the antagonist fails to be deterred from resorting to tactical nuclears in a local crisis.) The ambivalence may also reflect different assessments among Soviet military specialists of the risks involved in either initiating the use of tactical nuclears, or responding in kind to the enemy's initial use of nuclears in a local conflict.

Up until 1962, Soviet military writings had consistently promised automatic escalation to global war if tactical nuclears were introduced in a local war. But in November of that year, Marshal Malinovskiy made a statement in an important political-military pamphlet that could be read to mean that the Soviets would reply in kind to the use of tactical nuclears, but would not necessarily escalate the conflict. In May, in another important pamphlet Col. Gen. N.A. Lomov made the following flat statement without a caveat about certain escalation: "In local war, which can grow into a world war, nuclear means of armed struggle may also be used."

On the other hand, the older line stressing the likelihood of escalation has also found its way into print in recent months. Thus, the revised edition of the book, "Military Strategy" carefully weighed the problem (as if in refutation of opposite arguments by other Soviet theorists) and came to the conclusion that a tactical nuclear exchange in the course of limited warfare was certain to cause escalation:

> It could also happen that the antagonists in the course of the local war employ nuclear weapons of operational tactical designation, without resorting to strategic nuclear weapons. This radically changes the character of military operations, giving them great dynamism and decisiveness.

> However, it is doubtful whether the war will be conducted with the use of only some operational-tactical nuclear means. Once it has come to the point that nuclear weapons are being used, the antagonists will be forced to put into action all their nuclear might. The local war will change into a nuclear world war.

But this quotation characteristically harks back to a situation in which major nuclear powers are drawn into a local conflict; and on this point, doctrine has consistently stated that conflict would inevitably spread into a global nuclear war. Hence, to the Soviet way of thinking, the most dangerous situation in a local military crisis is when the USSR and the United States both resort to tactical nuclear weapons to defend their stakes. This view, as is known, is shared by some framers of U.S. defense policy. What remains--on a much less dangerous level--is the use of tactical nuclears in a crisis in which only one of the major nuclear powers is involved. Thus, by omission of statements to the contrary, the Soviets have left a lower risk opportunity for the United States to use its nuclears in local crises in such areas as the Far East and Southeast Asia, without threatening immediate escalation to general war.

Distant Limited Military Action

The Soviet search for tactical flexibility in the Middle East and Southeast Asia has already been reflected in policy. Beginning in 1962 the Soviets have demonstrated a willingness to use Soviet troops in combat in local crises on an unacknowledged basis. From the time of the Korean War to 1962, the nearest that the Soviets came to direct involvement in local war outside the East European satellites was in their backing of the Pathet Lao. That effort, however, was confined to training and logistic support. There was never any sign of direct participation of troops in combat in Laos, not even under the guise of training. However, as the Soviet military aid program

expanded over the past two years, it added the feature of limited, secretive employment of Soviet troops in combat situations on behalf of some states receiving Soviet aid.

The Indonesia-West New Guinea crisis and the UAR-Yemen war reflect at the very least a Soviet policy decision to use trained Soviet crews while indigenous crews are still in an early stage of training. But beyond this, it is difficult to say how much Soviet philosophy regarding the use of Soviet troops in local wars in underdeveloped areas has already been changed. We do not know, for example, whether the Soviets would favor the use of their troops on an acknowledged basis, under any circumstances, nor how large a military force they would be willing to commit in a local conflict in the Middle East or Southeast Asia. From the political standpoint, the Soviets have publicly pledged themselves to render support to newly emergent states but have never explicitly mentioned the possible commitment of Soviet troops.

The Cuban episode is of an entirely different order. In this case the deployment of combat ready Soviet units was intended not for use in a strictly local war between the United States and Cuba, but to serve a larger Soviet strategic objective which placed the USSR on the firing line. By the same token, Soviet pledges made after the crisis to defend Cuba implied defense from afar--involving the national security of the Soviet homeland and not Soviet troops in the locale alone.

In all probability, the Soviets have not yet changed their estimate that direct involvement of Soviet and U.S. forces, even in distant areas, would be extremely dangerous.

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There is not only the fear of escalation that restrains the Soviets. There is also the fact that the USSR has a very limited capability for conducting warfare at any distance from the bloc. Unless and until these restraints are lifted, the USSR will no doubt try to avoid (1) any direct involvement with U.S. forces in distant areas, and (2) any public knowledge of the employment of Soviet troops in combat in distant areas.

The march of Soviet thinking on limited warfare seems to be in the direction of overcoming the major obstacles in the way of attaining still greater political-military maneuverability in distant areas, and consequently greater Soviet prestige. The Soviets have expressed concern over the development of U.S. capabilities for distant action; they have called for close attention to be paid by Soviet military specialists to the problem of local wars; they have urged that local war problems be taken into account by Soviet military strategy; they have observed that local wars are most likely to break out in the near and Middle East, Far East, Africa and Cuba; and they have acknowledged the possibility that socialist countries could be involved in local wars.

The yearning for greater military prowess in distant areas may already have led to a quest for Soviet base rights or logistic support rights in some non-bloc countries which are recipients of Soviet aid.

The Soviets might find the idea of a system of foreign bases quite appealing from the standpoint of their tactical value--notably their importance to the Soviets in regard to enhancing Soviet limited warfare capabilities. Indonesia, for example, could provide a valuable logistic base if the Soviets decided to give more open support to revolutionary movements in Southeast Asia. As others have pointed out, the placement of medium range missiles in Indonesia under Soviet control could have a great influence on developments in Southeast Asia (depending not only on the U.S. response but on the Chinese Communist response as well). The mere presence of the Soviet missiles would have considerable influence on events: medium range missiles based on Java could cover all of Southeast Asia; and the Soviets could see in that a useful symbol for Soviet support of wars of liberation and a counterthreat to U.S. intervention in such wars.

The fly in the ointment, however, is the political reality. The leaders of the young states, jealous of their newly acquired sovereignty, are loathe to have it compromised.

Thus Indonesia has rejected the idea of Soviet control of bases on its territory. Syria wants aid, but does not want Soviet technicians and instructors in the country. And so forth. Under such circumstances, we are not likely to see the establishment of Soviet military bases in the Middle East, Asia, or Africa. If, however, the USSR manages to win over one of the small countries as an ally or to subvert its government, the possibility of the creation of a Soviet base on that country's territory would become quite real.

Effect on Weapons and Training

The change in Soviet thought on limited warfare will probably have an important impact on the training and equipping of Soviet forces. The basic orientation of the armed forces toward general nuclear war will almost certainly be retained, however. Thus, we expect requirements for general nuclear war to continue to be the principal factors determining the structure and size of the Soviet theater forces. The requirements themselves have been the subject of a long controversy, but the underlying strategic assumption that the armed forces must be trained and equipped to fight effectively under the worst conditions--general nuclear war--has not been questioned.

Where we might expect to see change, if the idea of limited warfare preparations becomes firmly implanted, is in the one-sided emphasis on nuclear warfare evident in Soviet military doctrine, planning and training. Up until 1962 the Soviets expected that any major conflict in Europe would either be nuclear from the start or would rapidly escalate into a global war. For that reason, virtually the full weight of professional Soviet military thinking on large-scale combat in Europe has been brought to bear on problems of nuclear war.

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[redacted] In short, there was no evidence of the existence of a military doctrine for the training and equipping of Soviet forces for large-scale limited warfare.

It may well have occurred to Soviet military specialists, as it has to some of us, that the overwhelming emphasis in Soviet doctrine on general nuclear war will probably erode the USSR's conventional war-making capability over the long run. (In a future situation of a strategic nuclear stalemate or standoff this could be disastrous for Soviet foreign policy.) This erosion has already begun. While some changes in Soviet force structure have no doubt improved Soviet conventional war machinery (motorization of infantry and increments to infantry conventional firepower), other measures (such as cutbacks in frontal aviation and tube artillery) have tended to have a detrimental effect on the conventional capability of the troops. The same may be said for the planning of operations: doctrine demands that nuclear weapons be the basis for planning of major military operations.

The dilemma of having to prepare the armed forces simultaneously for nuclear and limited warfare may, in terms of the ideal, be an insoluble one, inasmuch as the nuclear

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and conventional battlefields make very different, and at times, contradictory demands as regards mode of operations and equipment. And the USSR is bound to be more constrained in respect to satisfying dual force requirements than the U.S. because of more limited resources. But a compromise may be reached in Soviet military planning, whereby the erosion of conventional capabilities is slowed down or arrested and specific kinds of capabilities for limited warfare are added that do not now exist.

The recent appearance, after a long absence, of a spate of articles in the Soviet military press on the subject of amphibious landings, may be an indication of such a readjustment.

Until this time, evidently, the Soviets had no serious amphibious landing capability. The acquisition of one would importantly add to their capabilities in some of the underdeveloped areas where the Soviets have demonstrated the greatest willingness to become involved in local conflicts. It might have been this very capability, in addition to a new troop organization,

Finally, it might signify that the Soviets have at last begun to develop a military capability to defend their political interests in distant areas, and perhaps additionally to offer new challenges in the underdeveloped areas.